



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

TO: Chair Marsh
Vice-Chair Helm
Vice-Chair Brock Smith
Members of the House Committee on Energy and Environment

FR: Graham Trainor, President
Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: *Oregon AFL-CIO Support for Strong Labor Standards in -5 Amendment of HB 2021*

April 5, 2021

My name is Graham Trainor and I am the President of the Oregon AFL-CIO, the statewide federation of labor unions representing over 300,000 workers in every corner of the state and in just about every industry. We consistently prioritize lifting the voices of these workers in important policy discussions year in and year out. I also serve as co-chair of the Oregon Chapter of the Blue Green Alliance that unites labor unions and environmental organizations to solve today's environmental challenges in ways that create and maintain quality jobs and build a clean, thriving, and equitable economy. Thank you for the opportunity to join today and provide testimony on HB 2021 and the labor standards in the -5 amendment.

With a diverse membership made up of construction workers and environmental regulators, linemen and pulp and paper workers, nurses and manufacturing workers, education employees and public transit workers, thoughtful engagement on these types of policies and proposals is always vital. But there is a common theme throughout our efforts to bring worker voices to the table about this type of policy. Climate change is real, it's having devastating impacts on communities and workers everywhere, and it is imperative that workers are at the table alongside diverse stakeholders to ensure that as our state moves towards our climate and energy goals, working Oregonians are not left behind in any transition.

This is why for many years and on various climate and clean energy policy proposals, the Oregon AFL-CIO has consistently advocated for provisions that will ensure that a clean energy economy and future is one that also creates and promotes family-supporting jobs and protects workers in impacted industries. This is because we know that Oregon's communities and economy can only thrive when there are policies in place to ensure comprehensive training, robust input from Oregonians most impacted, and jobs that are safe and provide good benefits. Strong labor protections and standards are essential components to any clean energy policy in order for our state to realize the transformational power of a high-road, clean energy future.

We greatly appreciate the work of the Chair, this committee, your colleagues in the Senate, and proponents of the bill to ensure the inclusion of responsible contractor language that advances key workforce standards in the -5 amendment for HB 2021. As we noted in a coalition letter that I and other labor and community leaders

submitted to Committee members last month, Oregon workers deserve standards that promote skill building, good wages and benefits, and pathways towards retirement.

The inclusion of the following provisions in this bill will set Oregon on a path to ensure clean energy jobs are good quality jobs while also putting us in parity with other states who have passed or are in process of passing their own 100% RPS standard.

- Adopting an apprenticeship standard
- Setting goals for hiring and recruiting veterans, women, and people of color
- Setting an area wage standard
- Providing health and retirement benefits found in section 21

These provisions of the responsible contractor language in the -5 amendment represent a common ground approach that is the result of countless hours of negotiation between multiple stakeholders including industry, labor, and proponents of the bill.

The Oregon AFL-CIO and our allies will continue to support efforts to refine and strengthen this bill and will consistently speak up about the need for clean energy policy that works for impacted communities throughout Oregon and all Oregon workers.